

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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WOMEN OF THE KYODAN - five point program for action

The chairmen of the Women's Department in each of the 14 Districts of the United Church of Christ in Japan (Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan), met with the national Women's Department Committee members for three days last week, at the National YWCA Building in Tokyo. They evaluated their work and planned their program for the coming year.

1) Since the Youth of the Church will be in the focus of the thinking of the Kyodan next year (April-March), the first emphasis in women's work in the Kyodan will be "Christian training of children and youth in the home". Following the adage that "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world", they are giving especial attention to evangelism within the home, and evangelistic efforts to reach other homes.

2) The Women of the Church have been the most active group in supporting the home mission evangelism program of the Kyodan. This past year the women alone have been raising about one million yen toward the nine million yen budget for home mission work. Especially in the Kansai area (Kobe-Osaka) the women have been active in this work. Here they have sponsored a program in which each woman is asked to give ten yen each week for this project. The goal for the budget in the Kyodan next year is ten million yen, with the women expecting to continue their share in the work.

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3) The women will cooperate especially with the pioneer evangelism projects.

4) Although with a few exceptions there has not been a very close cooperation between the women of the church and the women missionaries in their area, during the next year steps will be taken to change this. Two women missionaries will be appointed to the Central Women's Department Committee will have one woman missionary on its committee. Through this means, they hope that there will be a more intimate relationship, and the women will be able to undergird the work of the missionaries more directly.

5) In order to train the women of the church for their job of "Christian training of children and youth in the home", there will be six district training conferences held during the coming year. The six districts will be Hokkaido, Tohoku, Tokyo, Osaka and Kyushu.

THE CAMPUS AND THE CHURCH - "What's the connection?"

The Japan Christian Education Association (see JCAN 1/15/56 p1) is composed of representatives of 5 post-graduate schools, 16 universities and colleges, 32 junior colleges, 73 senior high schools, 66 junior high schools, and 11 primary schools. All 203 of these institutions or departments of institutions are dedicated to witnessing to Christ through giving the best education possible.

Last week 56 people representing 31 institutions of junior college level and higher, met for two days at Atami to discuss the "Relation of Christian Colleges to the Church". They came to the conclusion that up until now, the relation had not been as close as it should be. The responsibility, they said, lay both with the local churches and with the institutions themselves.

On the part of the institutions they felt that the fault lay partly with their evangelistic methods. Students should be pointed more directly to some one local church where they can become a part of the congregation. A further difficulty is that the number of Christian members on most faculties is discouragingly small. The percentage of those who are giving a vital, dynamic witness for Christ in both words and action, is even smaller. Therefore, the heart of the problem is to train more Christian professors for this task.

A further ramification of this problem came in the discussion of whether or not it was good thing to have a church within the institution itself. Although only 4 out of the 31 institutions represented had such a church, a strong voice was raised in support of this method because in this central church, the Christian faculty members could join with the students to make a united witness before the rest of the campus. Those who opposed this

method pointed out that this tied the students to the campus on Sunday and cut off their connection with the churches in the world at large. Thus, when they graduate from the institution, there is a tendency for them to "graduate" from the church also. It is better, they argued, to have the students connected with an ongoing church, realistically set within the world at large, and not segmented off into this special age group.

These institutions will continue the study of this question during the rest of this coming year. Next year they will turn to the question: "The Christian College and the Culture of Japan".

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During the past year a special study commission of the Japan Christian Education Association has been investigating various curriculums for use in Bible courses in Christian middle and high schools. At the present, there is no uniform curriculum in use. Toward this end, seven representative schools have been asked to draw up their suggested plans for Bible curriculum by this coming March. These plans will be gathered together, studied and experimented with during the coming year.

It is hoped that a unified plan can be developed for wide usage by 1957.

KYODAN PIONEER EVANGELISM - refining a key strategy

For the past four years the United Church of Christ in Japan (Nihon Kirisuto Kyodan, membership approx. 156,000) in cooperation with ten boards of missions in North America has been engaged in a "five year plan" for pioneer evangelism. It has involved an annual budget raised in Japan and in North America which next year will reach almost ten million yen. Fifty-five of the ablest young seminary graduates have dedicated their services and thousands have offered their deepest prayers.

Last month, (Jan. 17-18) forty-two of these young pastors met with twenty members of the Cooperative Evangelism Committee to evaluate the pioneer evangelism program and make recommendations for the future.

The general pattern is to choose, in cooperation with the local distinct C.E.C., a place that seems of strategic importance where a self supporting church could be developed in five years. The first year, a young minister is sent there and his entire support is paid - ¥200,000. During this year, he starts evangelistic work in this area, gathering together the nucleus of a congregation. The next year his support is reduced to ¥150,000 and by the end of the fifth year, his financial support is discontinued.

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Year	projects started	projects stopped	become independent	total
1952	19	1	2	16
1953	14	1	-	29
1954	17	-	-	46
1955	9	-	-	55

As of last September, the total number of baptisms was 405 people.

In their evaluations last month, it was felt that it was very difficult for a young minister, usually fresh out of seminary, to go into a completely new community and build up a group of Christians who within five years could be self-supporting. There is reason to doubt that some of the groups that should become self-supporting by the end of next year will be able to do so. The conference group recommended three steps which would help in the future:

1) Pastors with some experience are far better equipped to do this work. If it is necessary to send graduates right out of seminary, it is highly desirable that they be given an orientation course with practical training for this work before being sent to their new project. A handbook containing advice on the basis of previous experience would be very helpful for this special kind of evangelism.

2) It is important that each project have a "mother church" which feels responsibility for spiritual, financial, and personal help. A pastor and, if possible a missionary, in the area should be assigned to give advice and help to each young evangelist.

3) Because rent for meeting places is so high, and because it is desirable to have a place to run a kindergarten in connection with the church, it is highly recommended that each project be helped to build a church building before all financial support is cut off.

JAPAN BAPTIST CONVENTION - reports and future plans

From January 18 to 21 representatives of all the committees and departments of the Japan Baptist Convention (membership approx. 6,000) met at the Amagi Assembly Grounds to hear reports of work and activities and to make plans for the coming year. Sixty-five people attended, representing eight departments.

Three specific plans for the coming year are:

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1) Dr. W. L. Howse, Director of the Department of Education of the Southern Baptist Church USA, will conduct a training course

for Sunday School teachers here from March 27 - April 9th.

2) Rev. Masamichi Shirobe, missionary to Okinawa from the JBC, will continue his second year of work there, supported by the Baptist churches in Japan who are raising his annual budget of 1,000,000 yen.

3) In Tobata of northern Kyushu, the Rinkosha ("neighborhood light-house") which has been doing evangelistic work among the blind, will become the center for a church-wide project for evangelism among the blind.

AVACO NEWS - of prices and premieres

The Audio Visual Aids Commission of the National Christian Council of Japan announces that in order to serve the churches more effectively, it is lowering the service charge on all films in the Film Library by thirty percent. They are going to do this, starting the first of this month, even if it makes the Film Library operate at a loss.

On Wednesday and Thursday evening, February 1 and 2, two premiere showings of the film John Wesley were held at the Christian A-V Center at Aoyama Gakuin in Tokyo. The one of a half hour, color, 16 m.m. film has now been fitted with a sound track in Japanese so that it may be used in primary evangelism as well as the churches. Actors from the AVACO Drama Group have actually put the Japanese words into the mouth of the actors on the screen, and appropriate music and sound effects have been added. The voice of John Wesley was supplied by Rev. Saburo Yasumura. The Japanese soundtrack was recorded by the magnistripe technique. This requires a special projector. However, it has the advantage of leaving the English optical soundtrack untouched. Either may be used.

For several month the film will be used in special evangelistic tours, after which it will become available throught the Film Library at a nominal service charge.

COMING EVENTS

February 17, Friday. WORLD DAY OF PRAYER will be observed in Japan and all over the world. Sponsored by the World Day of Prayer Committee of the General Department of the United Church Women of the NCCC, USA, the services will start on the Tonga Islands where Queen Salota leads her devout subjects in prayer, and continue throughout the day, around the globe, closing with the observance on St. Lawrence Island, Alaska. The 1956 service was written by an American Indian woman from the Cook Christian Training School, Phoenix, Arizona.

Three years ago bilingual services were started in Japan under the joint sponsorship of the World Day of Prayer committee of the National Christian Council of Japan and the Tokyo Council of Church Women - English speaking (of the Security Forces).

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Bill Graham Committee

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These services have spread to areas outside of Tokyo where Japanese churches are located near Security Force chapels.

It is the hope and desire that as many observances as possible will be union services of different denominations and if possible, be bilingual.

English programs are available for twenty yen each, the Japanese programs for five yen. Money for these should be included in the order sent to the Women's Commission, NCC of Japan, Christian Center, 2,4-chome, Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo.

February 20 - 24 THE REV. BILLY GRAHAM will preach to various public gatherings in Tokyo and Osaka.

February 20, 7 p.m. Tucker Hall, St. Paul University (Rikkyo Daigaku) a special meeting for missionaries in the Tokyo area;

Feb. 21 mass rally in the International Stadium of Tokyo;

Feb. 23, 7 p.m. Osaka Jyogakuin Auditorium, a special meeting for missionaries in the Osaka area;

Feb. 24 a mass rally in Osaka. These meetings are being sponsored by the "Billy Graham Committee".

